



Clathrate hydrate technology for cold storage in air conditioning systems



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ABSTRACT

Clathrate hydrate is an attractive technology for cold storage applications. It offers a high cold storage density and elevates the phase change temperature compared to water. It offers better heat transfer properties and improved cyclic stability compared to eutectic salts. This paper reviews previous work on clathrate hydrates as phase change materials (PCMs) for cold storage air conditioning applications. Three aspects have been focused on: the characteristics of clathrate hydrates, modification of clathrate hydrate properties, and practical utilization of clathrate hydrates as cold storage media. Specifically, refrigerant clathrate hydrates, CO₂ hydrates, hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates and multi-component clathrate hydrates are introduced. Technologies to decrease equilibrium pressure, increase dissociation enthalpy, accelerate formation process, decrease supercooling extent and enhance gas solubility are summarized. Clathrate hydrates based cold storage air conditioning systems that transport cooling in a manner of fixed container as well as in hydrate slurry are reviewed, and optimizing methods of system performance are studied. Finally, four features of clathrate hydrates, namely the self-preservation effect, memory effect, gas conversion and hydrate structure transformation are discussed.

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1. Introduction

Air conditioners equipped with cold storage offers a means to alleviate peak loading on electricity grids and to utilize power in off peak periods. Water and ice are the most commonly used cold storage media, for their low price and safety. However, liquid water has an intrinsic low cold storage density, thus a large storage volume is needed to achieve the required cold storage capacity. Ice melts and freezes at 0 °C, therefore the chiller has to work at low evaporating temperatures, resulting in an inferior Coefficient of Performance (CoP). By contrast, clathrate hydrates commonly have a latent heat of phase change close to that of ice, and a phase change temperature of 5–12 °C that matches well with the operating conditions of conventional air conditioning systems. Moreover, clathrate hydrate could enable direct contact charging and discharging, thus dramatically improving the heat transfer efficiency to and from a cold store. Clathrate hydrate manifests obvious advantages over conventional cold storage media (Table 1), thus is considered to be a promising candidate for cold storage and has sprouted numerous investigations [1].

Clathrate hydrates are crystalline solid compounds formed from water and gas molecules. The gas molecules (guest) are trapped in cages that are composed of hydrogen-bonded water molecules (host) [2]. The guest gas is usually a refrigerant gas, natural gas or other small gas molecule. The former is specified in this work as the gas of conventional refrigerant, namely chloro-fluoro-carbons (CFCs), hydro-chloro-fluoro-carbons (HCFCs) or hydro-fluoro-carbons (HFCs); the latter refers to terrestrial gases and mineral gases, typically including CO₂, N₂ and hydrocarbon gases [3]. Molecular properties of some featured guest gases are listed in Table 2 [4].

The aim of this work is to present a review of research progress on clathrate hydrates as PCMs in cold storage air conditioning systems, concerning the formation/dissociation conditions, optimizations and applications of various clathrate hydrates. Refrigerant clathrate hydrates, CO₂ clathrate hydrates, hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates, and multi-component clathrate hydrates are introduced in detail. Technologies to decrease the equilibrium pressure, increase dissociation enthalpy, accelerate formation process, decrease super-cooling effect and enhance gas solubility are analyzed. Moreover, clathrate hydrate based cold storage air conditioning systems that transport cooling in a manner of fixed container as well as clathrate

hydrate slurry are studied for practical system design and optimization.

2. Clathrate hydrates

Fundamental studies of clathrate hydrates generally concerns the following properties:

- the phase equilibrium conditions, for the compatibility with the operating conditions of cold storage systems;
- the phase change enthalpy, for evaluating the cold storage capacity;
- the hydrate nucleation and growth rate, for predicting the cold storage rate.

Van der Waals–Platteeuw solid solution theory is commonly used for theoretical studies of phase equilibrium behavior of clathrate hydrates [5]; while for experimental measurements, an apparatus including of a high-pressure cell was usually employed [6,7]. The dissociation enthalpy can be calculated by Clapeyron equation based on experimental data, or directly measured by an insulated boil-off chamber in a constant temperature bath [8].

2.1. Refrigerant clathrate hydrates

Most refrigerant gases can form clathrate hydrates under supportive conditions. However, CFCs and HCFCs have been gradually prohibited due to their ozone depletion potential and greenhouse impact. In contrast, HFCs clathrate hydrates have been widely studied since 1992 when CFCs phase out began to be implemented [9]. Equilibrium data of HFC-134a, HFC-125 and HFC-143a hydrate were measured by Hashimoto et al. [7], showing that HFC-134a hydrate had the lowest equilibrium pressure. The dissociation enthalpies of the three HFCs hydrates were all about

Table 1
Performance and economical features of different cold storage media.

Cold storage medium	Water	Ice	Eutectic salt	Clathrate hydrates
Phase change temperature	0–10	0	8–12	5–12
CoP of refrigerator	1	0.6–0.7	0.92–0.95	0.89–1
Heat transfer performance	Superior	Medium	Inferior	Superior
Investment	< 0.6	1	1.3–2	1.2–1.5

Table 2
Molecular properties of guest gases.

Guest	Structure	Hydrate dissociation pressure at 273 K (MPa)	Melting temperature (K)	Boiling temperature (K)	V (Å ³)	Max length (Å)
CH ₃ F	sl	0.2	131	195	33.5	4.7
CH ₂ F ₂	sl	0.2	137	221	38.9	5.2
CHF ₃	sl	0.3	118	191	42.9	5.2
CF ₄	sl	4.2	89	145	49.4	5.3
CH ₄	sl	2.5	91	112	28.6	4.3
C ₂ H ₆	sl	0.5	90	185	45.6	5.6
C ₃ H ₈	sII	0.2	85	231	62.4	6.7
CO ₂	sl	1.2	195	\	33.3	5.4
H ₂ S	sl	0.1	188	213	25.2	3.8
O ₂	sII	11.9	55	90	20.6	3.9
N ₂	sII	15.9	63	77	21.7	3.9
Ar	sII	10.5	84	87	27.8	1.9
Kr	sII	1.5	116	120	34.5	2.0
Xe	sl	0.2	161	165	42.2	2.2

Table 3
Properties of refrigerant gases.

Guest gas	Molecular formula	Critical temperature (°C)	Critical pressure (MPa)	Enthalpy of reaction (kJ kg ⁻¹)	Solubility (g kg ⁻¹) (water) (25 °C)	ODP	GWP (100 yr)	Re
HCFC-141b	CH ₃ CCl ₂ F	204.15	4.25	344	0.509	0.086	700	[11]
HCFC-142b	CH ₃ CClF ₂	136.45	22.80	349	0.14	0.043	2400	
HFC-134a	CH ₂ FCF ₃	101.06	4.059	358	0.15	0	1300	[9,11–16]
HFC-143a	CH ₃ CF ₃	72.89	3.776	383.9	\	0	3800	[13,14]
HFC-125	CHF ₂ CF ₃	66.25	3.631	362	0.09	0	3400	[9,12,14,15,18]
HFC-152a	CH ₃ CHF ₂	113.26	4.517	383	0.28	0	120	[11–14,18,19]
HFC-227ea	CF ₃ CHFCF ₃	102.8	2.980	132.6	0.26	0	3220	[14,20]
HFC-236fa	CF ₃ CH ₂ CF ₃	124.92	3.200	\	\	0	6300	[17,21]
HFC-236ea	CF ₂ CHFCF ₃	139.29	3.501	\	\	0	710	[17,20]
HFC-245fa	CF ₃ CH ₂ CHF ₂	154.35	3.651	\	\	0	820	[21–23]
HFC-365mfc	CF ₃ CH ₂ CF ₂ CH ₃	204.55	3.489	\	1.70	0	840	[24]
HFC-32	CH ₂ F ₂	78.11	5.777	390.5	0.0043	0	675	[9,14–16,18,25]
HFC-23	CHF ₃	25.85	4.815	240.0	0.10	0	11700	[18,25]

140 kJ mol⁻¹ near the freezing point. The upper quadruple point Q_2 , for L_g – L_w – H – V four-phase equilibrium, was tested at 283.19 K/0.416 MPa for HFC-134a hydrate, 283.95 K/0.930 MPa for HFC-125 hydrate, 283.33 K/0.838 MPa for HFC-143a hydrate. It is noticeable that, as long as one of the guest substances is in the gaseous state, the possible maximum of the hydrate formation temperature is T_{Q_2} . In order to utilize a fluid as the heat reservoir to which the heat released by the hydrate formation is discharged, T_{Q_2} is required to exceed the temperature of the fluid by several degrees [10]. More properties of refrigerant gases are listed in Table 3. Besides, HFCs hydrates that have potential to be PCMs for cold storage are: HFC-236ca, HFC-236cb, HFC-245ca, HFC-245cb, HFC-245ea, HFC-245eb, HFC-254ca, HFC-254cb, HFC-254ea, HFC-254eb, HFC-254fa and HFC-254fb.

2.2. CO₂ clathrate hydrate

Environmental issues related to the emission of greenhouse gases pose a great concern for refrigeration industry [26]. The utilization of CO₂ clathrate hydrate for cold storage is considered capable of achieving a high storage density, owing to the high dissociation enthalpy and large uptake efficiency of CO₂ in a limited hydrate volume, as well as relieving greenhouse effect problems by means of CO₂ recovery.

CO₂ molecules can form the sI clathrate hydrate and preferably fit in the 5¹²6² cages [27]. The clathrate has a critical temperature of 283.05 K and a critical pressure of 4.44 MPa [28]. By Differential Thermal Analysis (DTA) and Differential Scanning Calorimetry (DSC) methods, CO₂ hydrate was tested to offer a dissociation enthalpy of 501–507 kJ kg⁻¹ [26]. Thus CO₂ slurry appears obvious advantages over many other types of slurry, such as ice (334 kJ kg⁻¹) and TBAB (200 kJ kg⁻¹). It was reported that when the global CO₂ mole fraction was 2.88 mol% and the temperature was 276.24 K, the hydrate fraction in the slurry was 2.8 vol% and the available enthalpy was up to 1.15×10^4 kJ m⁻³(water) [29]. Therefore, CO₂ hydrate slurry is considered as a promising alternative of multiphase secondary refrigerant.

The general structure of CO₂ hydrate equilibrium data testing system is shown in Fig. 1 [30–36]. The system is mainly composed of three sections: a hydrate formation reactor cell, a gas supplying system and a measuring system. The reactor, which consists of an adiabatic cylindrical vessel, is installed on a magnetic stirrer with an agitator rotating within the liquid. The reactor is heated and cooled by an aqueous solution circulation into the jacket from a cryostat, and is linked to a gas storage vessel with a pressure reducing valve that maintains a constant pressure. The pressure in the reactor is measured by a pressure transducer while the temperature is measured by a probe inserted into the liquid.

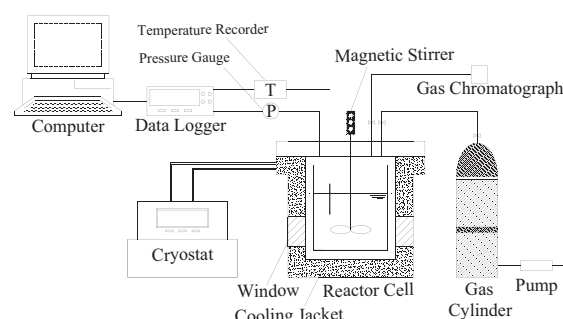


Fig. 1. Schematic of apparatus for measuring CO₂ clathrate hydrate equilibrium data.

CO₂ hydrate formation is widely examined from a chemical kinetics perspective. Jerbi et al. [37] investigated CO₂ hydrate formation kinetics in a semi-batch stirred tank in the aim of designing a circulation loop with heat exchangers for secondary refrigeration applications. They found that the hydrate growth was $1.45 \times 10^{-3}(\text{hydrate}) \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ for a stirring velocity about 450 rpm. For an isothermal circulation loop, the kinetic rate varied from $5.45 \times 10^{-3}(\text{hydrate}) \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ and $8.37 \times 10^{-3}(\text{hydrate}) \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$, with and without additives respectively, for their dispersive and promoter properties. Yang et al. [38,39] built an engineering test module to examine the effects of gas carrier, fluid velocity, slurry concentration and temperature on the heat transfer and kinetics of CO₂ hydrate formation. The system (Fig. 2), was mainly composed of a gas delivery system, a CO₂-saturated and raw water delivery system, a continuous flow reactor, a chiller, and a data acquisition system, etc. It was found that when the flow pattern was maintained in annular flow region, hydrate formation rates were as high as 0.45 s^{-1} under favorable conditions. However, as the flow pattern changed to slug or plug flow, the apparent rate constants decreased significantly (in the worst case falling to $< 0.01 \text{ s}^{-1}$), underscoring the importance of good inter-phase mixing. With vigorous mixing, hydrate formation kinetics were favorable and the formation became heat transfer limited.

2.3. Hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates

Hydrocarbon gases can form sI, sII and sH hydrates. Small gas molecules such as CH₄ and C₂H₆ can be engaged in lattice cavities of sI hydrates; larger gas molecules such as C₃H₈ and C₄H₁₀ can be engaged in lattice cavities of sII hydrates. Structures of hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates are summarized in Table 4 [40].

A number of experiments have been carried out with respect to the kinetics of hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates. According to the work of Bergeron et al. [41], the average reaction rate constant of

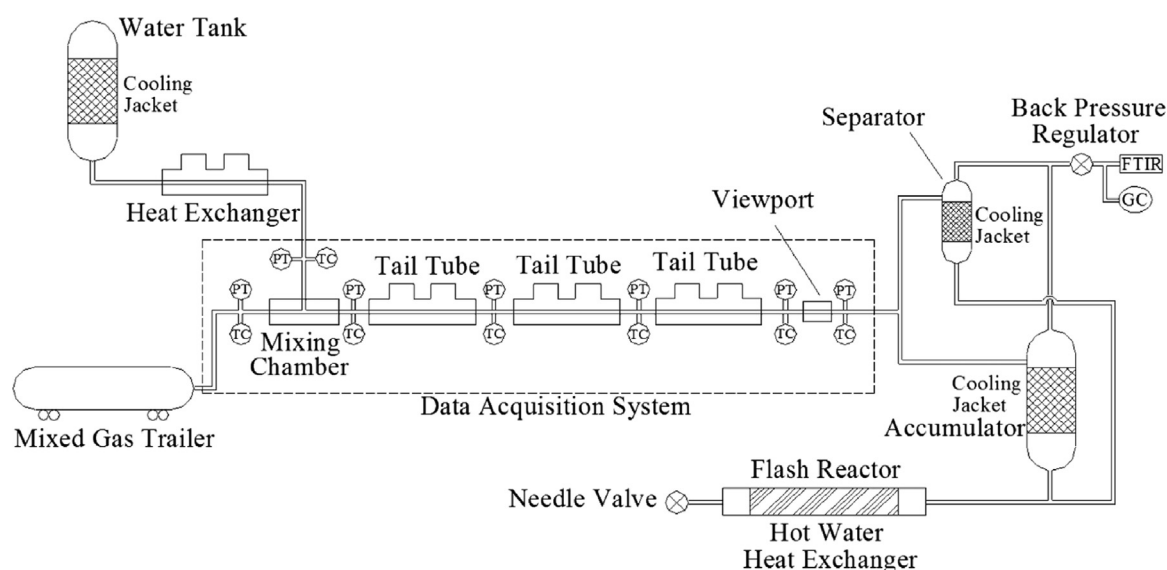


Fig. 2. Schematic diagram of the engineering test module system.

Table 4
Hydrate structures of hydrocarbon gases.

Structure of clathrate hydrate	Guest gas			
sl	Methane	Ethane		Methane + ethane
sII	Propane	Butane		Methane + n-butane
sH	Methane + methylcyclopentane	Methane + n-pentane	Methane + propane Neohexane	Isopentane

CH_4 hydrate formation was around $8.3 \pm 0.5 \times 10^{-8} \text{ m s}^{-1}$ with an average temperature of 275.1 K, and $61.5 \pm 4.8 \times 10^{-8} \text{ m s}^{-1}$ with an average temperature of 279.1 K. The reaction rate constant was found to increase with the increase of temperature, with an activation energy of 323 kJ mol^{-1} . An intrinsic kinetic model for the formation of CH_4 and C_2H_6 hydrates was proposed by Englezos et al. [42], verified with experiments obtained in a semi-batch stirred tank. The formation rate was tested to be proportional to the difference in the fugacity of the dissolved gas and the three-phase equilibrium fugacity. This difference defined the driving force which incorporated the pressure effects. Moridis et al. [43] estimated the thermal properties and kinetic parameters of hydration reaction in porous media by means of simulation. It was shown that the intrinsic rate constant of the CH_4 hydrate dissociation reaction was $1.78 \times 10^6 \text{ kg m}^{-2} \text{ Pa}^{-1} \text{ s}^{-1}$ with the activation energy of $8.97 \times 10^4 \text{ J mol}^{-1}$. Comparison with the results from pure CH_4 hydrate samples provided a measure of the effect of the porous medium on the kinetic reaction. It was also tested that the dissociation enthalpy of CH_4 , C_2H_6 , C_3H_8 and $\text{i-C}_4\text{H}_{10}$ are 56.9, 71.1, 126.0, $130.4 \text{ kJ mol}^{-1}$ [44]. The liquid-hydrate-vapor ($L_w\text{-H-V}$) phase equilibrium data of hydrocarbon gases are detailed in Table 5.

2.4. Multi-component clathrate hydrates

Single clathrate hydrates sometimes cannot meet all the conditions of a certain cold storage system. Accordingly, multi-component clathrate hydrates are proposed to improve global properties by complementary features of each component.

2.4.1. Multi-component system of refrigerant clathrate hydrates

Multi-component clathrate hydrates are potential to maintain the equilibrium pressures by adjusting the proportion of components. From Akiya et al. [59], the critical dissociation temperature and critical dissociation pressure of HFC-32+HFC-125 mixtures

with the HFC-32 fraction of 0, 52.49 and 100 wt% were 284.39 K/0.944 MPa, 291.55 K/1.429 MPa and 294.09 K/1.484 MPa, with the enthalpy of 135.0, 78.5 and 71.6 kJ mol^{-1} , respectively. Kobayashi et al. [15] measured the vapor-liquid equilibrium data for pure, binary and ternary systems containing HFC-32, HFC-125 and HFC-134a. As was calculated, COP for this system was higher than that for HCFC-22, resulting in about 15% energy-saving, when the mole fraction of HFC-32 and HFC-125 are 0.485 and 0.250, respectively. Lim et al. [60] used hydrocarbon gases to form hydrate with refrigerant gases. At 273.15 K, the equilibrium pressure of the propane+HFC-227ea system increased from 0.195 to 0.476 MPa; while at 283.15 K, the equilibrium pressure increased from 0.280 to 0.632 MPa with the mole fraction of propane ranging from 0 to 100%. Besides these, HFC-134a/HCFC-141b [61], HFC-32/HFC-143a/HFC-134a [62], and HFC-134a/cyclopentane [63] were also estimated practicable for cold storage applications. Properties of some comprehensively used multi-component refrigerant gases are listed in Table 6. According to the advantage complementary principle, some refrigerant gas pairs that might be able to form feasible PCMs were proposed by Li et al. [12]: HFC-365mfc+HFC-134a, HFC-365mfc+HFC-152a, HFC-365mfc+HFC-227ea, HFC-236ea+HFC-134a, HFC-236ea+HFC-152a, HFC-236ea+HFC-227ea, HFC-245fa+HFC-134a, HFC-245fa+HFC-152a, HFC-245fa+HFC-227ea, HFC-236ea+HFC-134a, HFC-236ea+HFC-152a, HFC-236ea+HFC-227ea, cyclopentane+HFC-227ea and cyclopentane+HFC-152a.

2.4.2. Multi-component system of hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates

Phase equilibrium data of binary hydrocarbon clathrate hydrate systems, such as $\text{CH}_4+\text{C}_2\text{H}_6$, $\text{CH}_4+\text{C}_3\text{H}_8$ and $\text{CH}_4+\text{i-C}_4\text{H}_{10}$ were reported [45,47]. It was studied by Thakore et al. [64] that the presence of C_3H_8 and $\text{i-C}_4\text{H}_{10}$ could largely bring down the equilibrium pressure of CH_4 hydrate from 3.370 to 0.278 MPa and from 3.099 to 0.128 MPa, respectively (Fig. 3). The equilibrium pressure of $\text{C}_3\text{H}_8+\text{i-C}_4\text{H}_{10}$ hydrates varied with a little change

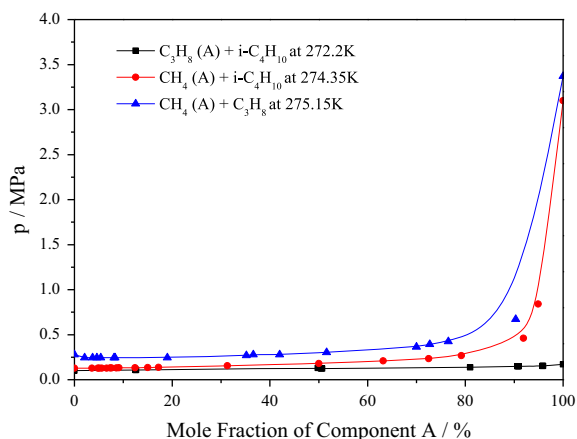
Table 5L_w–H–V phase equilibrium data of hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates.

Hydrocarbon gas	Molecular formula	Critical temperature[28] (K)	Critical pressure [28] (MPa)	Equilibrium temperature (K)	Corresponding equilibrium pressure (MPa)	Re
Methane	CH ₄	\	\	273.7–285.9	2.77–9.78	[45]
				274.25–285.78	2.92–9.54	[46]
				285.7–301.6	9.62–68.09	[47]
				290.2–320.1	15.9–397.0	[48]
				305.08–320.54	98–493	[49]
Ethane	C ₂ H ₆	287.85	3.35	273.7–286.5	0.51–2.73	[45]
				277.8–287.2	0.848–3.082	[50]
				278.8–288.2	0.95–3.36	[51]
				290–324	20–479	[52]
Propane	C ₃ H ₈	278.85	0.545	273.2–278.0	0.165–0.472	[53]
				274.2–278.4	0.207–0.542	[54]
				276.77–278.55	0.368–0.547	[55]
Isobutane	i-C ₄ H ₁₀	275.03	0.165	273.2–275.1	0.110–0.167	[56]
				273.2–275.0	0.115–0.169	[57]
Cyclopentane	C ₅ H ₁₀	280.85	\	273.36–280.22	0.0069–0.0198	[58]

Table 6

Properties of multicomponent refrigerant gases.

HFCs	Components	Proportion	Critical temperature (°C)	Critical pressure (MPa)	ODP	GWP
R410a	R22/152a/124	53/13/34	107.3	4.61	0	1018
R410b	R22/152a/124	61/11/28	72.5	4.95	0	1221
R404a	R125/143a/134a	44/52/4	72.1	3.74	0	3922
R407a	R32/125/134a	20/40/40	75.7	4.24	0	2107
R407b	R32/125/134a	10/70/20	74.4	4.08	0	2804
R407c	R32/125/134a	23/25/52	86.7	4.62	0	1774
R408a	R125/143a/22	7/46/47	83.8	4.42	0	3036
R507a	R125/143a	50/50	70.9	3.79	0	3985

**Fig. 3.** Variation of the equilibrium pressure of binary hydrocarbon hydrates with mole fraction of components.

from 0.1013 MPa to 0.1713 MPa with proportion. The L_w–H–V phase equilibrium data of binary hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates are listed in Table 7. It is noticed that, in multi-component clathrate hydrate systems, the upper quadruple Q₂ evolves into a line caused by the fact that a single hydrocarbon is no longer

presented, therefore a combination of hydrocarbon and water vapor pressures creates a broader phase equilibrium envelope. However, since the quadruple line has a gradient much larger than the L_w–H–V line, and the pressure on this line increases dramatically with an increase in temperature, the practical operations should better be implemented before T_{Q2} is reached.

2.4.3. Multi-component system of CO₂/N₂ and hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates

Multi-component hydrates are sometimes prepared combining light alkane hydrocarbon gases with CO₂ or/and N₂. The formation of CH₄+CO₂ hydrate was observed by measuring the vapor-phase composition using gas chromatography and Raman spectroscopy by Uchida et al. [27]. It was indicated that the kinetics of the mixed clathrate hydrate was controlled by the competition of both molecules to be enclathrated into the hydrate cages. CH₄ molecules were preferentially crystallized in the early stages of hydrate formation when the initial concentration of CH₄ was much less than that of CO₂, thus pure CH₄ hydrates first formed. This phenomenon suggested that CH₄ molecules played important roles in hydrate formation. L_w–H–V phase equilibrium data of binary systems of hydrocarbon gases with CO₂ or N₂ are listed in Table 8. Phase equilibrium data of multi-component systems (with more than two guest gases) of hydrocarbon gases with CO₂ or/and N₂ are detailed in Table 9. The variations of the equilibrium pressure of C₃H₈, i-C₄H₁₀ and n-C₄H₁₀ combined with CO₂ at given temperatures are plotted in Fig. 4 [76]. It was showed that the global equilibrium pressure went up slowly with the increase of CO₂ proportion at low CO₂ mole fractions, while it went up sharply at high CO₂ mole fractions (≥ 93%). However, there was a slight pressure drop in each line at very high CO₂ mole fractions (≥ 98%).

3. Modification of clathrate hydrates

3.1. Decrease of equilibrium pressure

In many cases, clathrate hydrates cannot achieve equilibrium within the pressure range corresponding to adapted temperatures for cold storage systems. Taking CO₂ hydrate as an example, it manifests rigorous equilibrium conditions as is shown in Fig. 5 [1].

Tetra-n-butyl ammonium bromide (TBAB) has been subjected to the most intensive studies for modifying the phase equilibrium behavior of clathrate hydrates. TBAB in water can form a semi-clathrate hydrate in which TBAB molecules act as both the host

Table 7L_w–H–V phase equilibrium data of binary hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates.

Gas composition	Mole fraction of component A (%)	Mole fraction of component B (%)	Equilibrium temperature (K)	Corresponding equilibrium pressure (MPa)	Re
Methane(A) + ethane(B)	1.60	98.40	283.9–287.8	1.810–3.080	[65]
	4.70	95.30	279.4–287.6	0.990–2.990	
	17.70	82.30	281.6–287.0	1.420–3.000	
	56.40	43.60	214.8–283.2	0.945–2.434	[45]
	90.40	9.60	274.8–283.2	1.524–3.965	
	98.80	1.20	274.8–280.4	2.861–5.088	
Methane(A) + propane(B)	23.75	76.25	274.9–281.4	0.263–0.830	[66]
	37.10	62.90	274.4–282.3	0.270–0.945	
	71.20	28.80	274.8–283.2	0.365–1.151	[45]
	88.30	11.70	274.8–283.2	0.552–1.558	
	99.00	1.00	274.8–283.1	1.627–4.358	
Methane(A) + isobutane(B)	36.40	63.60	273.8–276.9	0.159–0.284	[67]
	71.40	28.60	273.9–282.7	0.208–0.786	
	84.80	15.20	274.0–288.9	0.304–2.030	
	94.00	6.00	274.8–288.5	0.505–2.820	[47]
	95.40	4.60	293.8–305.0	6.720–63.330	
	98.90	1.10	274.8–277.6	1.324–1.841	
	99.77	0.23	275.2–279.7	2.080–3.440	[67]
Methane(A) + n-butane(B)	94.18	5.82	277.99–281.43	2.050–3.290	[68]
	96.09	3.91	276.91–287.55	2.150–11.050	
	97.52	2.48	276.4–286.4	2.300–10.400	
	98.36	1.64	276.0–288.5	2.480–13.720	
Ethane(A) + propane(B)	28.00	72.00	276.5–277.9	0.460–0.660	[51]
	44.30	55.70	275.9–277.4	0.050–0.720	
	65.80	34.20	273.9–277.6	0.440–1.060	
	72.90	27.10	273.4–275.8	0.490–0.920	
	81.40	18.60	273.1–279.6	0.540–1.300	
	85.70	14.30	279.7–283.3	1.190–2.020	
Propane(A) + isobutane(B)	12.50	87.50	272.2	0.108	[69]
	49.80	50.20	272.2	0.130	
	95.90	4.10	272.2	0.153	
Propane(A) + n-butane(B)	72.50	27.50	273.2	0.244	[70]
	86.30	13.70	275.2	0.339	
	96.10	3.90	274.2	0.228	
Isobutane(A) + n-butane(B)	0.748	99.252	263.4–265.3	0.0732–0.0808	[71]
	0.77	99.23	261.1–267.3	0.0562–0.0688	
	0.835	99.165	264.3	0.0632	

and the guest. There are still small dodecahedral empty cages in this semi-clathrate hydrate, thus it is able to uptake, store and separate small gas molecules under certain thermal conditions [84,85]. Nguyen et al. [86] conducted experiments on CO₂-TBAB hydrate formation. The equilibrium pressure was lowered from 35 bar to 2.73 bar at 279.3 K with TBAB concentration of 0.29 mol %. As can be seen in Table 10, TBAB decreased the formation pressure by a factor of 10–50. Arjmandi et al. [87] measured phase boundaries of TBAB and different clathrate hydrates. The results showed that, in general, semi-clathrates of TBAB and guest gases were more stable than single clathrate hydrates at low-pressure conditions, and this stability increased with the increase of TBAB concentration. The dissociation conditions of these semi-clathrate hydrates are summarized in Table 11. However, this phenomenon would change at high-pressure conditions, especially for semi-clathrates formed with low TBAB concentrations. In the experiments conducted by Wang et al. [88], semi-clathrates were formed from gaseous mixtures of CO₂, H₂ and CO in TBAB solutions in an isochoric equilibrium cell with the TBAB concentrations of 0.05, 0.10 and 0.20 mol%. The equilibrium data for these hydrates are shown in Fig. 6. Meysel et al. [33] conducted experiments on semi-clathrates formation from CO₂ and N₂ (with the CO₂ fraction of 0.75, 0.50 and 0.20, respectively) in TBAB solutions with the TBAB concentration of 0.05, 0.10 and 0.20 mol%. The results are shown in

Fig. 7, indicating a similar tendency of the effect of TBAB concentration on the global equilibrium pressure.

Small amounts of tetrahydrofuran (THF) can change the sl of CO₂ hydrate to sII, thus decreasing its equilibrium pressure. Martínez1 et al. [89] studied the equilibrium pressure of CO₂-THF hydrate with 10 wt% THF at 280 K and found that the equilibrium pressure reduced to 0.2 MPa, compared with 2.9 MPa of single CO₂ hydrate. Delahaye et al. [34] tested the formation conditions of CO₂-THF-water system using DTA and DSC. The results showed an average relative pressure decrease of 79% at a low initial concentration of THF (3.8 wt%). The formation pressure could be lowered to 0.038 MPa with the presence of 15 wt% THF. It is suggested that cyclopentane (CP) can also form sII clathrate hydrates with or without a help gas to fill small cavities and stabilize the structure [90]. Since CP only occupies large cavities, small gas molecules, such as H₂ and CO₂, can be more easily engaged in the small cavities. The dissociation temperature of H₂-CP hydrate under 2.7–11.1 MPa and CO₂-CP hydrates under 0.89–3.51 MPa were determined using a high-pressure Micro-DSC by Zhang et al. [91]. It was found that, the dissociation temperature of H₂-CP hydrate was higher than that of H₂-THF hydrate, but lower than that of H₂-TBAB hydrate; while the dissociation temperature of CO₂-CP hydrate was slightly higher than that of both CO₂-THF hydrate and CO₂-TBAB hydrate. Neopentane is also

Table 8L_w–H–V phase equilibrium data of hydrocarbon gases and CO₂/N₂.

Gas composition	Mole fraction of component A (%)	Mole fraction of component B (%)	Equilibrium temperature (K)	Corresponding equilibrium pressure (MPa)	Re
Methane(A)+carbon dioxide (B)	92	8	283.2	6.80	[72]
	78	22	283.4	6.23	
	59	41	281.8	4.03	
	26	74	281.6	3.79	[73]
	15	85	282.7	4.37	
	3.46	96.54	273.5–282.3	1.10–4.80	
	31.7	68.3	280.3	3.24	
	61.6	38.4		3.77	
	79.7	20.3		4.37	
	91.0	9.0		4.85	
Ethane(A)+carbon dioxide (B)	5.31	94.69	276.0–282.7	1.58–3.90	[73]
Propane(A)+carbon dioxide (B)	8	92	273.9–283.7	0.676–3.179	[75]
	25	75	280.2–283.8	0.979–1.917	
	60.0	40	274.8–279.7	0.324–0.793	[76]
	83.0	17	278.2–279.1	0.503–0.641	
	90.1–1.5	9.9–98.5	273.7	0.2206–1.3583	
Isobutane(A)+carbon dioxide (B)	64.3–1.3	35.7–98.7	278.2	0.5516–2.2270	[76]
	65.0–1.3	35.0–98.7	282.0	1.2483–3.69414	
	79.3–0.7	20.7–99.3	273.7	0.1448–1.3238	
	46.0–1.0	54.0–99.0	277.6	0.4137–2.0822	
	20.9–2.1	79.1–97.9	280.9	0.8756–3.1716	
n-Butane(A)+carbon dioxide (B)	7.7–0.8	92.3–99.2	273.7	1.1379–1.3241	[77]
	3.8–0.9	96.2–99.1	278.2	2.4000–2.3034	
Propane (A)+nitrogen (B)	6.18	93.82	274.5–289.2	1.72–13.71	[77]
	13	87	275.1–286.2	1.10–5.54	
	28.3	71.7	274.6–280.8	0.569–1.72	
	54.2	45.8	274.2–280.3	0.332–1.19	
	75	25	274.5–278.7	0.256–0.676	
Nitrogen (A)+carbon dioxide (B)	3.48	96.52	273.1–280.2	1.22–2.95	[73]
	9.01	90.99	273.4–279.1	1.37–3.09	
	82.39	17.61	272.85–280.55	7.240–14.220	[78]
	51.85	48.15	273.75–282.00	3.195–8.975	
	2.22	77.80	274.00–284.25	2.000–7.445	
	3.41	96.59	274.95–283.55	1.565–5.115	

recognized as a potential sII clathrate hydrate former. Dissociation data for CP and neopentane in their binaries and ternaries with CH₄ or/and N₂ was reported by Tohidi et al. [83]. The predicted hydrate dissociation conditions (Fig. 8), showed that CP and neopentane could lower the dissociation pressure to a larger extent than benzene and cyclohexane in their binaries with CH₄. The results of comparison with some other hydrate forming compounds indicated that CP was the strongest hydrate promoter, with neopentane in the second place. Besides, tetra-n-butylammonium chloride (TBACl), tetra-n-butylammonium nitrate (TBANO₃) and tetra-n-butylphosphonium bromide (TBPB) [92], cyclohexane, tetrahydropyran, 2-propanol [93,94], 1,4-dioxane and acetone [95], 3-methyl-1-butanol [35], methylcyclohexane (MCH) and cis-1,2-dimethylcyclohexane (cis-1,2-DMCH) [46] were also effective to moderate the equilibrium pressure of clathrate hydrates.

3.2. Increase of dissociation enthalpy

Dissociation enthalpy of clathrate hydrate relates directly to the capability of cooling releasing, thus is of great importance. The addition of THF can change the hydrate sI to sII and increased the amount of entrapped guest species, thus leading to enhanced hydrate stability and dissociation enthalpy. Delahaye et al. [34] found that the dissociation enthalpy of CO₂–THF systems were two times higher than that of single CO₂ hydrate. The enthalpy of the binary system was tested as 147.4 kJ mol^{−1} at 278.7 K with 10.16 wt% THF, compared with that of the pure CO₂ hydrate of

70.8 kJ mol^{−1} at 278.7 K. Depending on the concentration of CO₂ and THF, the dissociation enthalpy of mixed hydrates was found to be in the region of 112.37–152.27 kJ mol^{−1} [96]. Enthalpies for pure and mixed CO₂ and N₂ gases, with or without THF as an additive, were measured by Kang et al. [78], as can be seen in Table 12. For G·nH₂O hydrates, n stands for the number of water molecules in the unit cell and G stands for the pure guest gas; for xCO₂·yN₂·46H₂O hydrates, x and y are the calculated number of CO₂ and N₂ molecules, respectively, in sI; and for xCO₂·yN₂·zTHF·136H₂O hydrates, x, y and z stands for the calculated number of CO₂, N₂ and THF molecules, respectively, in sII. In the work of Mayoufi et al. [92], DSC measurements of dissociation enthalpies of CO₂ hydrates with TBACl, TBANO₃ and TBPB were conducted. The CO₂–TBPB hydrate presented the highest dissociation enthalpy (Fig. 9). It was noticed that the fusion heat of mixed hydrates increased significantly with the increase of CO₂ pressure, which could be explained by the fact that TBACl, TBANO₃ and TBPB could also accommodate CO₂ in semi-clathrate structures and stabilize the structures, thus resulting in a lift in the dissociation enthalpy. Under pressures of 1–2 MPa, the dissociation enthalpy of CO₂–TBPB hydrate was even higher than that of CO₂–TBAB hydrate [97–99]. sH hydrates can store the largest amount of small guest gas principally because the ratio of small to large cages is 5:1, compared to 2:1 for sII and 1:3 for sI [100]. Nakamura et al. [46] found the addition of MCH and cis-1,2-DMCH can change the structure of CH₄ hydrates to sH, which not only increased the enthalpy but also reduced the hydrate formation pressure. The

Table 9
L_w-H-V phase equilibrium data of multicomponent hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates.

mol% of CH ₄	mol% of C ₂ H ₆	mol% of C ₃ H ₈	mol% of i-C ₄ H ₁₀	mol% of n-C ₄ H ₁₀	mol% of i-C ₅ H ₁₂	mol% of n-C ₅ H ₁₂	mol% of C ₆ H ₁₄	mol% of CO ₂	mol% of N ₂	Equilibrium temperature (K)	Corresponding equilibrium pressure (MPa)	Re
97.25	1.42	1.08	\	\	\	\	\	\	\	273.5–281.9	0.92–2.67	[79]
86.41	6.47	3.57	0.99	1.14	\	0.78	\	\	0.64	278.8–298.3	1.255–27.32	[80]
93.20	4.25	1.61	\	\	\	\	\	0.51	0.43	277.7–293.3	1.600–14.13	
88.36	6.82	2.54	0.38	0.89	\	1.01	\	\	\	276.8–293.2	1.207–12.00	
65.4	12.7	10.3	\	3.7	\	\	\	0.20	7.7	274.8–294.0	0.627–8.536	[45]
87.9	4.4	4.9	\	1.5	\	\	\	0.20	1.1	273.7–286.5	0.600–2.861	
78.4	6.0	3.6	\	2.4	\	\	\	0.20	9.4	273.7–283.2	0.724–2.213	
79.4	5.8	3.6	\	1.4	\	\	\	0.30	9.5	273.7–282.1	0.752–2.096	
91.0	3.2	2.0	\	3.1	\	\	\	0.40	0.3	273.7–292.7	0.765–9.391	
90.8	3.0	2.1	\	3.2	\	\	\	\	1.0	273.7–291.5	0.758–7.729	
75.2	5.9	3.3	\	1.1	\	\	\	0.20	14.3	274.2–282.1	0.758–2.131	
88.5	4.3	2.0	\	1.7	\	\	\	\	3.4	273.7–280.4	0.793–1.813	
90.6	3.8	1.5	\	2.0	\	\	\	0.9	1.2	273.7–290.9	0.883–8.384	
67.4	3.7	1.9	\	1.2	\	\	\	0.8	25.0	274.3–286.0	1.069–4.592	
96.5	0.9	1.8	\	\	\	\	\	0.6	0.2	273.7–289.8	1.262–10.439	
73.29	6.70	3.90	0.36	0.55	\	0.20	\	\	15.0	281.6–290.9	1.765–5.833	[81]
79.64	9.38	3.22	0.18	0.58	\	0.15	0.05	\	6.8	283.3–291.0	2.186–5.661	
72.78	14.50	7.63	\	2.65	\	0.63	0.11	\	1.70	288.75	4.207	[82]
67.69	13.50	14.10	\	2.45	\	0.58	0.10	\	1.58	289.85		
62.49	12.47	20.62	\	2.26	\	0.58	0.11	\	1.47	289.85		
76.62	11.99	6.91	1.82	2.66	\	\	\	\	\	273.7–282.0	0.4966–1.4138	[76]
52.55	8.12	4.74	1.31	1.88	\	\	\	31.40	\		0.5931–1.6828	
24.42	3.99	3.07	0.75	0.92	\	\	\	66.85	\		0.7586–2.2276	
12.38	1.96	1.66	0.37	0.48	\	\	\	83.15	\		1.3655–3.5103	
7.86	1.13	0.86	0.20	0.33	\	\	\	89.62	\		1.3379–3.4690	
85.24	7.68	3.31	1.19	0.85	0.30	0.31	\	0.22	0.90	279.1–294.8	1.317–11.769	[83]

mol% stands for mole fraction.

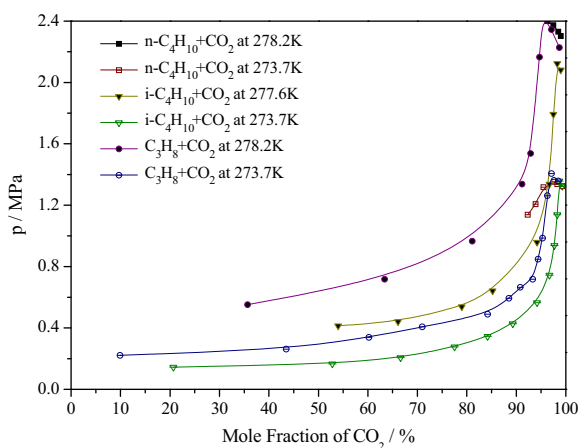


Fig. 4. Variation of the equilibrium pressure of binary clathrate hydrates of CO₂ and hydrocarbon gas with CO₂ mole fraction.

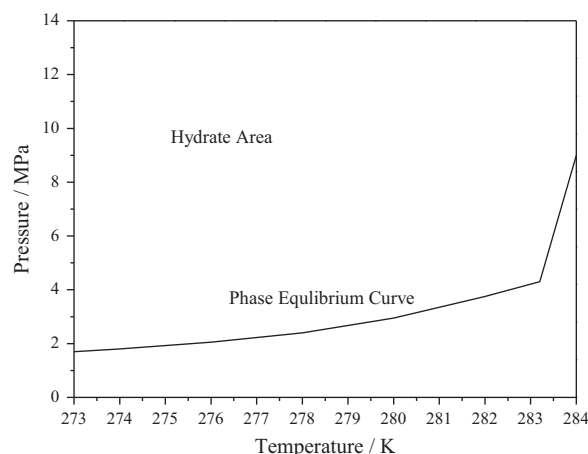


Fig. 5. Phase diagram of CO₂ clathrate hydrate.

enthalpy of CH₄-MCH hydrate was 374.1 kJ mol⁻¹ at 274.09 K, and that of CH₄-cis-1,2-DMCH hydrate was 382.7 kJ mol⁻¹ at 274.18 K.

3.3. Acceleration of formation process

Fast hydrate formation plays a critical role in efficient energy-saving considering cooling charging and discharging. However, the clathrate hydrate formation is a complex reaction kinetics problem in a multi-element and multi-phase heat flow system with irregular phase transition behavior and anomalous transient state. Clathrate hydrates generally form in the interface between two phases, and their further growth requires water or gas diffusing through the hydrate region, thus the crystallization would be

Table 10
Equilibrium pressure of CO₂ hydrate with and without TBAB.

TBAB (mol%)	T (K)	P (bar)	P _{without TBAB} (bar)
0.29	279.3	2.73	35
	282	6.4	36.9
	284	8.4	143.6
0.61	286.1	10.7	270
	286.2	11.2	372
3.6	290.9	33.2	1220
9.4	284	8.15	143.6
	285	9.86	243

Table 11
Measured dissociation conditions of gas-TBAB clathrate hydrates.

Guest gas	Concentration of TBAB	T (K) (± 0.2 K)	P (MPa)
Hydrogen	0.10	280.15	4.233
		281.45	9.639
	0.43	286.05	3.600
		286.25	5.226
Methane	0.05	287.15	4.688
		288.65	7.040
	0.10	287.15	2.413
		289.15	4.482
		290.65	6.757
	0.20	287.65	1.421
		290.15	3.310
		291.65	5.276
	0.30	293.35	8.028
		291.05	3.283
		292.65	5.110
Nitrogen	0.10	285.15	4.688
		288.15	10.945
Carbon dioxide	0.10	285.55	1.400
		287.35	2.320
		289.25	4.090
	0.427	287.25	1.248
		288.75	1.793
		290.15	2.896
	0.05	291.15	3.517
		280.35	0.979
Natural gas (87.32% methane + 5.67% ethane + 1.68% propane + 0.23% 2-methyl propane + 0.40% n-butane + 0.10% 2-methyl butane + 3.24% nitrogen + 1.36% carbon dioxide)	0.05	282.35	2.068
		283.55	2.854
		284.55	3.482
		286.95	5.419
		290.95	9.515
	0.10	283.15	1.145
		284.15	1.720
		286.97	3.694
		289.05	5.812
		286.15	0.828
	0.43	290.65	4.972
		292.45	7.966

time-consuming. The formation process of CO₂ hydrate is reported to be 100 min by Fournaison et al. [26] and 2 h by Delahaye et al. [101], and CH₄ hydrate formation is about three times longer than CO₂ hydrate formation [102]. For the purpose of accelerating clathrate hydrate formation, promoters such as mechanical agitation, magnetic interference, additives and structural optimization of the reactor are extensively proposed.

3.3.1. Mechanical agitation and magnetic interference

Xie et al. [103] compared three mechanical hydration enhancement methods. It was found that all characteristics were superior in the way of continuous mechanic blending method (with the total cold storage amount of 27.2 MJ and the average hydrate growth velocity of 0.5876 kg min⁻¹). However, the most energy was also consumed under continuous mechanical blending, and after a long time operation all connecting components in the system trended to loosen. According to Linga et al. [104] who obtained significant gas uptake and separation efficiency at lab-scale by stirring with a gas-inducing mechanical agitation system, hydrate crystallization must be carried out without mechanical agitation if hydrates are to be used commercially. That is, for safety and economic reasons, it would be better to work in quiescent conditions during hydrate formation. It was found that ultrasound could greatly improve gas–liquid mass transfer, especially below gas induction speed. This improvement was boosted by pressure.

In typical conditions of organic synthesis: 323 K, 1100 rpm, 10 bar, the gas–liquid mass transfer coefficient in liquid phase was multiplied by 11 with ultrasound (20 kHz/62.6 W) [105]. Liu et al. [106] verified that ultrasonic wave had an impact on hydrate formation, and the range of ultrasonic wave power that was advantageous to promote the hydrate formation was 58–1000 W.

3.3.2. Additives

Surfactants, such as sodium dodecyl sulfate (SDS), sodium tetradecyl sulfate (STS) and sodium hexadecyl sulfate (SHS), cetyl trimethyl ammonium bromide (CTAB), dodecyl trimethyl ammonium bromide (DTAB), dodecyl trimethyl ammonium chloride (DTAC), linear alkyl benzene sulfonate (LABS), dodecylbenzene sulfonic acid (DBSA), sodium dodecyl benzene sulfonate (SDBS), ethoxylated nonylphenol (ENP), Tween and Span20, can provide nucleus and help to break through the metastability, thus are feasible for shortening the induction time.

The effects of three anionic surfactants, SDS, STS and SHS, on CH₄ hydrate formation were tested by Okutani et al. [107] in an unstirred chamber. In each experimental operation, hydrate formation continued for a limited time and then practically ceased, leaving only a small proportion (15% or less) of the aqueous solution unconverted into hydrate crystals. The variations in the time-averaged rate of hydrate formation were 7.0 h for SDS at 2000 ppm, 6.4 h for STS at 100 ppm, and 8.2 h for SHS at 100 ppm. It was reported that the addition of CTAB (100 ppm) to the water shortened the hydrate pressure decay halftime to 45 min, showing that the process could be catalyzed. Such catalysts could specifically enhance the building of the hydrate structures of CO₂ [108]. Besides, the effect of SDS, LABS, CTAB and ENP on the formation and dissociation of CH₄ hydrate have been investigated, with each tested with 3 concentrations (300, 500 and 1000 ppm) [109]. The effect of anionic surfactants DBSA and SDBS; cationic surfactants CTAB and DTAB; and non-ionic surfactants alkylpolyglucoside (APG), TritonX-100 (TX100), and dodecyl polysaccharide glycoside (DPG) on CH₄, C₂H₆ and C₃H₈ hydrate formation were studied by ZareNezhad et al. [110]. Li et al. [111] estimated the effects of DTAC in 0.29 mol% TBAB aqueous solution on the induction time of CO₂ hydrate formation. In another work of Li et al. [32], the effect of 0.29 mol% TBAB solution in conjunction with CP on hydrate-based CO₂ capture were investigated. More than 80 mol% of the amount of gas consumed were obtained within 400 s at 274.65–277.65 K and 2.5–4.5 MPa.

Structural revulsant, such as silver iodide and potassium oxalate monohydrate, is another kind of promoter which is used as the template agent. Porous medium, such as glass powder, silica gel, molecular sieve, poly HIPE, dry water and dry gel, can also accelerate the hydrate formation by promoting hydrate formation through the enhancement of mass transfer [112]. In addition, nanoparticles can be used to promote heat transfer between the gas and water, thus speeding up the growth of hydrate [113].

3.3.3. Structural optimization of the reactor

Formation process can also be accelerated by modifying the structure of the reactor. Okutani et al. [107] examined the promotion of CH₄ hydrate formation with the aid of a water-cooled cold plate, a steel-made flat-plate-type heat sink, vertically dipped into the aqueous phase across the gas/liquid interface. The increase in CH₄ uptake volume relative to its level in the absence of the cold plate was of a factor of 1.73. This factor exceeded that for the increase in the total surface area, 1.51, and that for the increase in the total horizontal perimeter, 1.62. Hydrate formation in a fixed bed column was conducted by Linga et al. [114], showing that the rate of hydrate formation was significantly greater and thereby resulted in a higher percent of water conversion of hydrate in

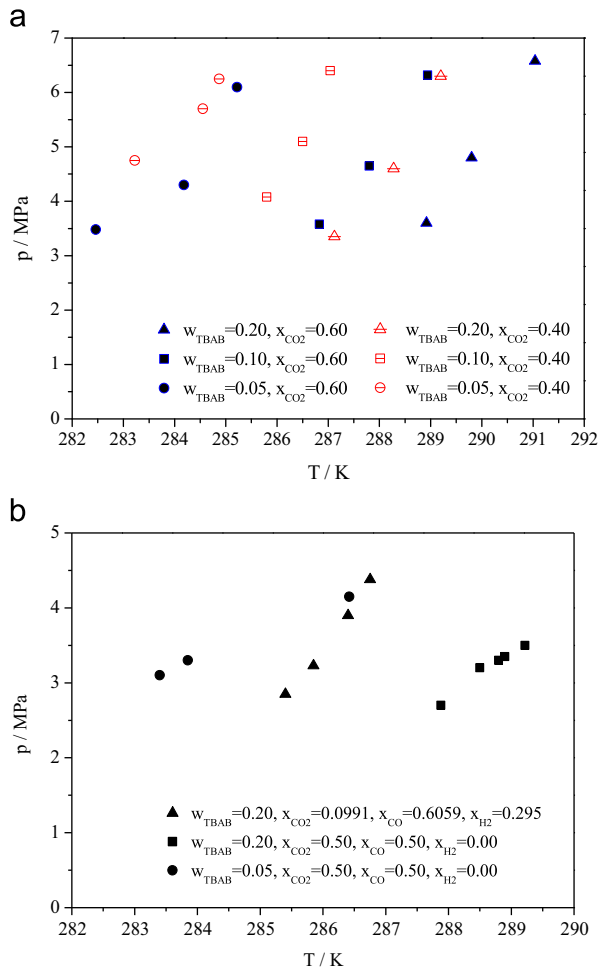


Fig. 6. Three-phase equilibrium conditions for hydrates formation from $\text{CO}_2 + \text{CO} + \text{H}_2$ in TBAB aqueous solutions. (a) Binary mixture of $\text{CO}_2 + \text{H}_2$ and (b) Ternary mixture of $\text{CO}_2 + \text{CO} + \text{H}_2$.

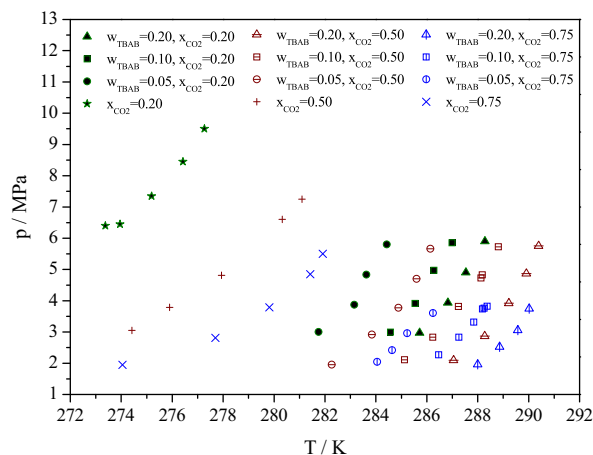


Fig. 7. Three-phase equilibrium conditions for hydrates formation from $\text{CO}_2 + \text{N}_2$ in TBAB aqueous solutions.

lesser reaction time. For instance at about 3 h, the gas uptake in a stirred bed was about $0.019 \text{ mol(gas)} \cdot \text{mol}^{-1}(\text{water})$, whereas that in the case of the fixed bed reactor was $0.083 \text{ mol(gas)} \cdot \text{mol}^{-1}(\text{water})$. Li et al. [115,116] presented the favorable effects on the nucleation and growth of HCFC-141b clathrate hydrate in a static water column of adding an iron rod. The iron rod, combined with proper surfactant, effectively induced phase permeation between

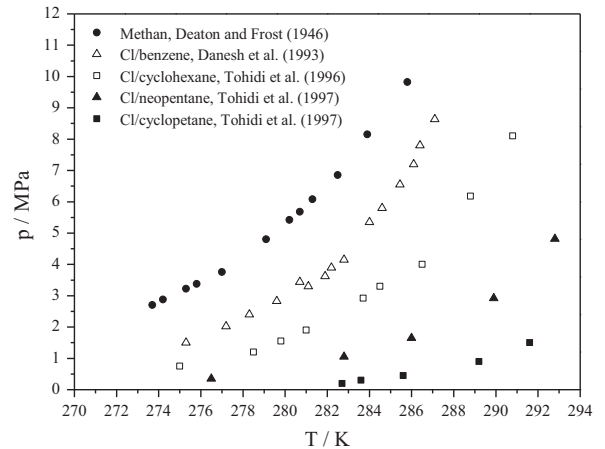


Fig. 8. Hydrate phase boundary for CH_4 and its binaries with heavy hydrate formers.

Table 12

Enthalpies of dissociation for pure and mixed CO_2 and N_2 gases with or without THF.

Guest gases	Dissociation enthalpy (kJ mol^{-1})	Hydrate composition
CO_2	65.22 ± 1.03	$n=7.23$
N_2	65.81 ± 1.04	$n=5.94$
$0.17 \text{ CO}_2 + 0.83 \text{ N}_2$	64.59 ± 1.02	$x=5.43, y=1.89$
$0.70 \text{ CO}_2 + 0.30 \text{ N}_2$	63.41 ± 1.00	$x=7.08, y=0.25$
$0.17 \text{ CO}_2 + 0.83 \text{ N}_2 + 0.01\text{THF} + 0.99\text{H}_2\text{O}$	109.01 ± 1.72	$x=2.96, y=9.47, z=11.39$
$0.17 \text{ CO}_2 + 0.83 \text{ N}_2 + 0.03\text{THF} + 0.97\text{H}_2\text{O}$	118.94 ± 1.87	$x=2.35, y=7.42, z=12.53$
$0.70 \text{ CO}_2 + 0.30 \text{ N}_2 + 0.01\text{THF} + 0.99\text{H}_2\text{O}$	107.18 ± 1.69	$x=9.97, y=2.58, z=10.94$
$0.70 \text{ CO}_2 + 0.30 \text{ N}_2 + 0.03\text{THF} + 0.97\text{H}_2\text{O}$	113.66 ± 1.79	$x=8.11, y=2.19, z=13.16$

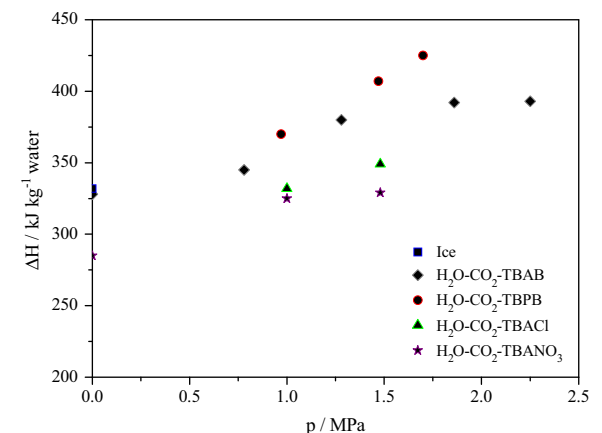


Fig. 9. Enthalpy of CO_2 hydrate with different additives under different pressures.

water and refrigerants, the hydrate formers, which were immiscible in general, thus considerably reducing the induction time for nucleation and promoting hydrate growth. When the temperature was $274.15\text{--}279.15 \text{ K}$, the hydrate nucleation happened in 3–30 min and the hydrate formation was completed in 1.5–8 h. In addition, the size of pressure vessel has an effect on the formation of clathrate hydrates. By McCallum et al. [117], the induction time of hydrate nucleation appeared to be greatly reduced by using a 72 L vessel which established the pressures and temperatures

required for CH₄ and CO₂ hydrate stability compared with a 450 mL Parr vessel.

3.4. Decrease of supercooling extent

The difference between critical dissociation temperature and hydrate reaction temperature is defined as supercooling extent, which, if occurs during clathrate hydrate formation, would lower the efficiency of a chiller. Thus, to minimize supercooling extent of clathrate hydrates imposes great importance on the performance of air conditioning systems.

It is feasible to decrease the supercooling extent by adding reasonable proportions of additives. According to Isobe et al. [118], the magnitude of supercooling required for the inception of HFC-134a hydrate was reduced moderately by adding alumina or zinc powder to the water phase in which HFC-134a was to be vaporized. An even larger reduction in supercooling can be achieved by adding a non-ionic surfactant. Besides, calcium hypochlorite can boost rapid crystal nucleus formation, and is a versatile cleaning chemical to clear away impurities and a strong oxidizer that can break down and destroy organic debris from adsorbing on the surface of the crystal nucleus or the growing crystal. Benzenesulfonic acid sodium salt can decrease the surface tension of water, decrease the diameter of bubbles and increase the rising frequency of bubbles, thereby decrease the resistance of mass transfer between gas and water molecules. Also, it makes the liquid emulsify into tiny liquid drops, thus the effective interface area between the two phases can be increased and great deal of hydrate nuclei is produced. Bi et al. [119] demonstrated a decrease in supercooling from 2.33 to 1.55 °C by adding benzenesulfonic acid sodium salt of 0.03%. The drawback of adding a surfactant is an increase in the effective specific volume of the resultant clathrate hydrate, calling for a larger space for storing a specified mass [118].

Although a larger flow rate can enhance the convection heat transfer between PCM and the secondary refrigerant, it can also cause a negligible temperature rise of PCM resulting in an increase in supercooling extent. The influence of flow rate of the reactor on supercooling extent was investigated by Bi et al. [120], presenting that when the flow rate was lower than 450 l h⁻¹, the supercooling extent decreased quickly with the increase of the flow rate to a minimum of 1.97 °C; while when the flow rate was larger than 450 l h⁻¹, the supercooling extent increased slowly with the increase of the flow rate. This optimized value of flow rate is practicable for the minimization of supercooling extent of clathrate hydrates.

3.5. Enhancement of gas phase solubility

Gas solubility has a rather large influence on the equilibrium pressures of some clathrate hydrates, such as H₂S and CO₂, because the solubility of these gases in water is quite high even at low pressures. The influence of gas solubility on the equilibrium pressures of CH₄ and N₂ is also important because of their high equilibrium pressures. The root mean square deviation on the calculation of the dissociation pressures for CH₄ with and without solubility along the L_w-H-V line is respectively 2.63% and 4.97% [121]. The solubilities of some hydrocarbon gases are listed in Table 13.

Table 13
Solubility of natural gas under standard conditions.

Guest Gas	CH ₄	C ₂ H ₆	C ₃ H ₈	i-C ₄ H ₁₀	n-C ₄ H ₁₀	C ₅ H ₁₀	N ₂	CO ₂
Solubility (× 10 ⁻³)/g(gas) · kg ⁻¹ (water)	2.48	3.10	2.73	1.69	2.17	3.32	1.19	60.8

Temperature and pressure are two important factors on gas solubility. Hashemi et al. [122] carried out predictions using Henry's law to estimate the solubility of CO₂. Under a pressure of 2 MPa, the solubility of CO₂ rose from 0.0150 mol% at 274.0 K to a peak of 0.0174 mol% at 277.5 K, and then dropped linearly back to 0.0150 mol% at 285.0 K. The CO₂ solubility in pure water in the presence of CO₂ clathrate hydrate was measured at temperatures of 273–284 K and pressures from 2 to 6 MPa. It was found that the solubility increases with increasing temperature in the hydrate formation region; while in the absence of clathrate hydrate, the gas solubility increases with decreasing temperature. The amount of gas dissolved in liquid in equilibrium with clathrate hydrates was 0.0163 mol% at 274.25 K and 0.0281 mol% at 282.95 K with the pressure maintained at 6 MPa [123]. Thereby, the solubility of guest gas should be taken into consideration while determining the hydrate formation temperatures and pressures. In addition, co-solvents, such as dissolved propylene glycol (PPG) and polyethylene glycols (PEG), are also resorted to for increasing gas solubility [124,125]. However, how co-solvents affect the crystallization process of clathrate hydrates, especially at high concentrations, is still unknown.

4. Clathrate hydrates for cold storage air conditioning applications

4.1. Clathrate hydrate based cold storage air conditioning systems

Generally, clathrate hydrate based cold storage system can be classified into direct contact type and indirect contact type. Direct contact cold storage systems has no intermediate heat exchanger, thus manifests higher heat transfer efficiency and lower initial cost. However, it faces difficulties in oil return of the compressor. In contrast, although the indirect contact system with intermediate heat exchangers has a relatively higher facility cost, it can be operated under more practical conditions and is more potential to be applied in large-scaled systems. The charging and discharging principle of a refrigerant clathrate hydrate based cold storage system is illustrated in Fig. 10 [11,126].

An observational study was carried out on clathrate hydrate formation in a cold storage tank incorporated into a vapor compression refrigerator loop by Mori et al. [127]. The working fluid, R12, flowed into the cold storage tank (Fig. 11) and evaporates, resulting in the cooling of the fluids and the formation of R12 hydrate. The hydrate appeared in two forms, making up separate layers in tank: one in the form of slurry particles sedimented at the bottom and the other in the form of a solidified foam floating on the free surface of the water phase. The hydrate layer built on the lower water/R12 liquid interface had the form of a dense slurry while a sufficient amount of liquid water still remained in the crystallizer to suspend the hydrate particles. This feature is favorable for dense cold storage in a limited volume.

Fig. 12 illustrates the conceptual design of a clathrate hydrate based refrigeration system contrived by Ogawa et al. [10]. The system mainly consists of (1) a compressor in which gas and water are mixed and compressed, (2) a hydrate forming reactor in which the hydrate is formed at a temperature exceeding that in the environment of the system, thereby releasing heat to the environment, (3) a slurry pump for conveying the hydrate slurry and

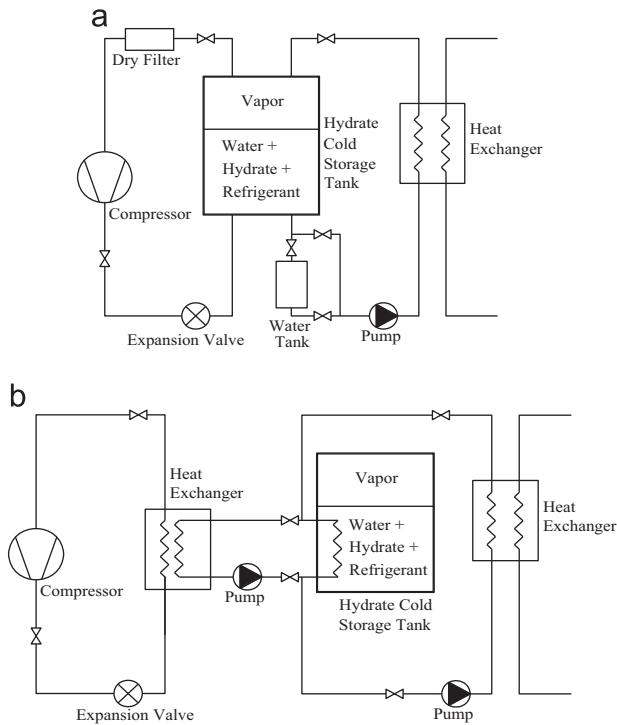


Fig. 10. Schematic diagram of direct contact and indirect contact hydrate based cold storage system.

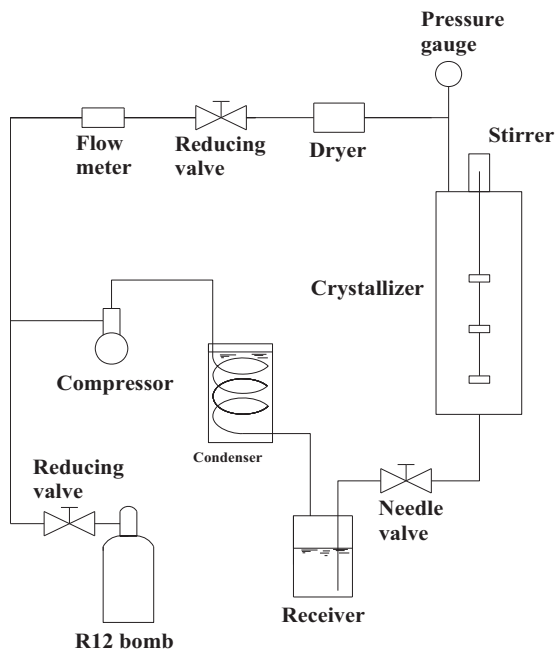


Fig. 11. Schematic diagram of a R12 hydrate based cold storage refrigeration system.

controlling the pressure difference between the two reactors, (4) the hydrate-dissociating reactor in which the hydrate is dissociated, thereby absorbing heat from a space to be cooled. The pair of HFC-32 and CP was selected as the working medium for simulation of this refrigeration system. The simulations revealed that, if the hydrate formation temperature and dissociating temperature were adjusted to 25.5 °C and 7.5 °C, respectively, the COP of the system should be as high as 8.0. This fact indicated that the

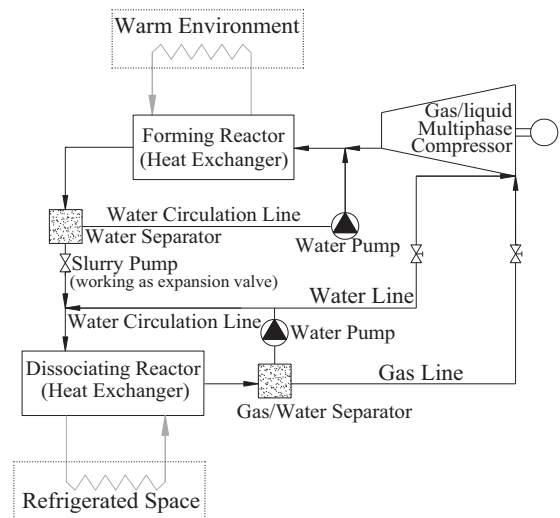


Fig. 12. Conceptual design of a clathrate hydrate based refrigeration system.

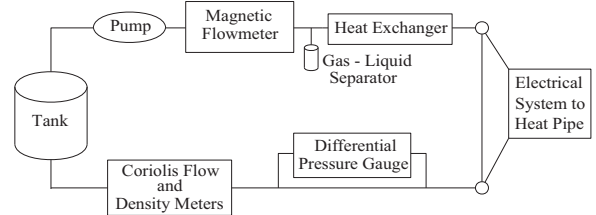


Fig. 13. Conceptual design of a refrigerant loop of CO₂ hydrate slurry.

hydrate-based refrigeration system could surpass conventional refrigeration systems in thermodynamic efficiency. Meanwhile, in a laboratory-scale hydrate-based refrigeration system, HCFC-22 was used as the guest substance with the temperature of 5 °C and the pressure of 0.4 MPa. The heat flow indicated that the system could be operated continuously over 2 h.

Jerbi et al. [128] presented a conceptual design of a refrigeration system in which CO₂ hydrate slurry was used as a two-phase secondary fluid, which allowed CO₂ hydrate slurry forming and dissociating continuously. The loop is shown in Fig. 13. The system was composed of two parts, one for the formation and storage of CO₂ hydrate slurry (the tank reactor) and another for its circulation and dissociation (the circulation loop). The tank reactor had a capacity of 25 L, which could resist a pressure about 4.5 MPa and provide a heat flux about 1–5 kW for a hydrate fraction between 10% and 30%. When the CO₂ hydrate flowed in the loop, the heat exchanger was chosen to allow the decomposition of the slurry and exchange the same heat flux as which was provided in the reactor.

4.2. Improvement methods of charging and discharging performance

Bi et al. [120] developed a HCFC-141b hydrate cold storage experimental system, including a cold storage tank and cold/hot reservoirs. The experimental results indicated that the cold storage effect of the system was better when the volumetric flow rate in the crystallizer was 150–450 l h⁻¹ and the corresponding cooling rate was 0.055–0.105 °C min⁻¹, then the formation rate of HCFC-141b hydrate was 0.30–0.4 g s⁻¹, and the cooling energy stored was 2.9–4.0 MJ. Experimental research on the discharging process in a clathrate hydrate cold storage system was also performed by

Bi et al. [119,129]. In this system, the inner-heat exchanger/outer-crystallization technology and the integrated condenser/evaporator structure were adopted. Results showed that the instantaneous dissociation rate was close to twice as the corresponding instantaneous formation rate of gas-hydrate, and the cooling energy release rate was obviously higher than the storage rate, which was resulted from the temperature difference between the heat transfer medium and the clathrate hydrate.

Both the charging and the discharging process were dominated by heat transfer and mass transfer. However, as to the discharging process, the effect of the heat transfer was the main influencing factor [129]. Therefore, charging and discharging performance improvement may focus on heat and mass transfer enhancement. A novel small scale of clathrate hydrate cold storage apparatus, consisted of a storage tank, a refrigeration system and a cooling release system, was designed by Xie et al. [130]. The operating results showed that the cold storage performance could be improved greatly by adding a heat exchanger with vertical metal fins in the tank; SDS (the additive) with concentration of 0.04 wt% helped to improve the cold storage performance, with the total cold storage amount raised to 27.2 MJ, the average hydrate growth velocity up to $0.5876 \text{ kg min}^{-1}$ and the Hydrate Packed Factor up to 49.7%. In addition, decreasing of the coolant temperature or increasing of the coolant flow rate could also make the amount of stored cooling increased [103]. HFC-134a clathrate hydrate, though has excellent phase change properties, it alone cannot be industrially used because the hydrate floating would cause the upper space in the storage tank to be filled and cause difficulties in charging and discharging. Wu et al. [131] developed a HFC-134a hydrate cold storage system with alcohol additives. The results showed that 1.34% n-butanol additive exhibited the best result which substantially accelerated the cold storage rate. The lumped hydrate density increased apparently comparing with pure HFC-134a hydrate, which eliminated the hydrate floating during the hydration process under certain additive concentration. It was indicated that the added alcohol was essential for a stable and smooth cold storage operation, and a cold storage tank with indirect-contact configuration was industrially applicable. The hydration characteristics of a quiescent reactor with inner-placed vertical heat transfer tube were theoretically studied. The reaction material was R141b water solution with 300 ppm sodium dodecyl sulfate. In this case, water can permeate into the guest phases along the surface of heat transfer tube, thus massive clathrate hydrate could grow steadily along the vertical heat transfer tube in guest phases without mechanic stirring. It was also revealed that the coolant temperature had great effects on the growth rate: the lower the coolant temperature, the quicker the clathrate hydrate grew.

Taking entropy generation minimization as optimization objective, the optimal control strategies of the clathrate hydrate cold storage system were determined by Bi et al. [132]. It was indicated that the entropy generation at the phase change stage occupied the most portions of the total entropy generation. The optimal operating characteristic of the clathrate hydrate cold storage system could be achieved by keeping the phase change rates uniform, which were regulated and controlled according to constant heat transfer rates in the charging and discharging processes. The minimum entropy generation in the optimal configuration decreased by 8.2% compared with normal situation, showing that the optimal control was effective to improve the performance of cold storage system.

4.3. Clathrate hydrate slurry

In order to be considered as a suitable secondary refrigerant, clathrate hydrate slurry should fulfill satisfying flowing conditions. Firstly, the pressure and temperature conditions should be adapted to the operating environment of air conditioning

applications. Secondly, the fluid should contain a relatively large fraction of solid phase to supply enough cooling energy and stable temperature level. Thirdly, the flowing conditions should be supportive to preserve efficient heat transfer. Clathrate hydrate slurries could be rheologically characterized by its apparent viscosity, which strongly depends on the mass fraction and the organization of solid particles in the liquid phase related to the nucleation, growth, shape, size distribution, agglomeration, etc.

According to the behavior index n and the yield stress τ_0 , fluids can be classified into five patterns [101]: Newtonian Fluid when $n=1$ and $\tau_0=0$, and then $\tau_w = \mu \dot{\gamma}_w$; Bingham Fluid when $n=1$ and $\tau_0 > 0$, then $\tau_w - \tau_0 = \kappa \dot{\gamma}_w$; Pseudoplastic Fluid when $0 < n < 1$ and $\tau_0 = 0$, then $\tau_w = \kappa \dot{\gamma}_w^n$; Dilatant Fluid when $n > 1$ and $\tau_0 = 0$, then $\tau_w = \kappa \dot{\gamma}_w^n$; Herschel–Bulkley Fluid when $0 < n < 1$ and $\tau_0 \neq 0$, then $\tau_w - \tau_0 = \kappa \dot{\gamma}_w^n$. τ_w is the shear stress, $\dot{\gamma}_w$ is the shear rate, μ is the dynamic viscosity, and κ is the viscosity coefficient. Using the Ostwald viscometer method, τ_w , $\dot{\gamma}_w$ and n can be calculated from

$$\tau_w = \frac{D\Delta P}{4L} \quad (1)$$

$$\dot{\gamma}_w = \left(\frac{8u}{D}\right) \left(\frac{3n+1}{4n}\right) \quad (2)$$

$$n = \frac{d \ln(D\Delta P/4L)}{d \ln(8u/D)} \quad (3)$$

where D is the pipe diameter, m; L is the pipe length, m; ΔP is the pressure drop, Pa; u is the fluid velocity, m s^{-1} . The rheological equation and apparent viscosity data of different hydrate slurries from numerous academics are summarized in Table 14.

5. Promising features of clathrate hydrates as cold storage media

5.1. Self-preservation effect

Clathrate hydrates of some gases exist at temperatures below the ice melting point outside their stable region. This anomalous behavior is known as the self-preservation phenomenon, which is of considerable scientific interest since it would make it possible to store cooling under ice point, and boost practical application for natural clathrate hydrate storage and transportation [140]. For instance, CH_4 hydrate can be stored at atmospheric pressure below the melting point of ice, even though this temperature is well outside the zone of thermodynamic stability of the hydrate and allows dissociation [141]. Melnikov et al. [142] observed that hydrates could exist in a metastable state without visible dissociation for a long time within the pressure–temperature area bounded by the I–H–V equilibrium line, the supercooled L_w –H–V metastable equilibrium line and the isotherm $T=253 \text{ K}$ for CH_4 hydrates or $T=263 \text{ K}$ for C_3H_8 hydrates. The long life time of hydrates in a metastable state suggested the presence of a significant energy barrier (the activation energy) for ice nucleation on the hydrate surface, and the ice-shielding model was suggested to explain the self-preservation phenomenon. Additionally, the role of the supercooled water in hydrate self-preservation has been discussed. The self-preservation effect of clathrate hydrates has spawned much research, but the mechanism is still not well understood. For example, one remaining puzzle is that $\text{CH}_4 + \text{C}_2\text{H}_6$, a mixed clathrate hydrate of sII, does not show preservation behavior comparable to CH_4 hydrate, whereas its dissociation pressure is lower than that of CH_4 hydrate at the same temperature [4].

Table 14
Rheological equation and apparent viscosity data of different hydrate slurries.

Slurries	Rheological equation at different hydrate concentration	Apparent viscosity (mPa s)	Re
CO ₂ hydrate slurry	4–20 vol% Herschel–Bulkley fluid	4.5–34.92 ($\gamma=500\text{ s}^{-1}$)	[101]
	4–10 vol% Dilatant fluid	3.8–42.2 ($\gamma=400\text{ s}^{-1}$)	[133]
	10 Vol% Bingham Fluid		
	10–20 vol% Pseudoplastic fluid		
CH ₄ hydrate slurry	Bingham fluid	1–3.5	[134]
R141b hydrate slurry	Dilatant fluid	1.1–1.7 ($\gamma=400\text{ s}^{-1}$)	[135]
TBAB hydrate slurry	Pseudoplastic fluid	50–148 ($\gamma=400\text{ s}^{-1}$)	[136]
	43–55 wt% Bingham fluid	\	[137]
	12–70 wt% Pseudoplastic fluid	3.5–1000 ($\gamma=1\text{--}1000\text{ s}^{-1}$)	[138]
TBAF hydrate slurry	0–42 wt% Pseudoplastic fluid	10–750 ($\gamma=1\text{--}1000\text{ s}^{-1}$)	
TBPB hydrate slurry	0–28.2 vol% Pseudoplastic fluid	4–41	[139]
	9.5–33 wt% Pseudoplastic fluid	\	[92]

γ stands for shear rate.

5.2. Memory effect

Academics found that the induction time of hydrate formation using the water that dissociated from previous hydrates was much shorter than that of hydrate formation using unused water, while the reformed hydrates will still melt at the same dissociation temperature. This phenomenon was termed as memory effect [143,144]. It is suggested that for various species of clathrate in gas–liquid systems, such as CO₂/water and hydrocarbon gas/water, memory effect possesses a modified structure which allows easier hydrate re-formation [145]. Once applied memory effect in air conditioning systems, the hydrate would undergo a continuously charging and discharging, thus the induction time could be largely reduced. Wu et al. [146] has carried out experiments in a pressure cell. In this study, from the first test to the fourth test, the induction time of the system was 129.50, 73.28, 37.85 and 16.93 min, respectively. However, when the dissociation temperature was higher than 25 °C, the memory effect vanished. The memory effect for cyclopentane hydrate formation has been investigated by Sefidroodi et al. [147], revealing that provided the superheating above the equilibrium temperature (7.7 °C) was no more than 2–3 °C, the hydrates was obtained much faster during cooling to 0.0 °C than formed for the first time. Sun et al. [148] studied the clathrate hydrate formation in two systems: one with Tween-40 at $1 \times 10^{-3}\text{ mol L}^{-1}$ and another with Tween-40 at $2 \times 10^{-3}\text{ mol L}^{-1}$. It was concluded that the induction time was shortened by 10–20 times in the experimental system containing residual structures. With respect to the mechanism of the memory effect, it has been reported [149] that the hydrate was observed to melt from the periphery outwards leaving a hydrate core. It was assumed that the residual structure of hydrate dissociation, as the source of the memory effect, provides a site for mass transfer between host and guest molecules. Therefore, a driving force is created between the residual structures and its surrounding bulk phase to promote the hydrate nucleation.

5.3. Gas conversion

Gas conversion from a CH₄ clathrate hydrate to a CO₂ clathrate hydrate would be advantageous for CH₄ hydrate dissociation and CO₂ hydrates formation. It is assumed that, if CH₄ and CO₂ hydrates are together utilized in a cold storage system, the gas conversion process would make it possible to charge and discharge cooling in two steps at two different temperatures, thus fulfill energy gradient utilization for a certain cold storage application and cooling demand.

For the replacement mechanism, it is assumed that the CO₂–CH₄ replacement chiefly includes two parts: CH₄ hydrate dissociation

and mixed hydrate re-formation from the dissociated water and free water. The conversion of CH₄ hydrate into CO₂ hydrate may thus, in principle, be a solid state transformation in hydrate phase. In the re-formed hydrate, CO₂ molecules mainly occupy large cages while CH₄ molecules mainly occupy small cages. Pure CH₄ and pure CO₂, as well as mixtures of CH₄ and CO₂, would form sl hydrate [150,151]. Qi et al. [152] showed that, without the hydrate dissociation, CH₄ molecules were not easily released for the clathrate cages and CO₂ molecules could not penetrate into the interior cages of the hydrate because of the barrier of the cage walls constructed by hydrogen-bonding network. From the work of Lee et al. [153], CH₄–CO₂ conversion phenomenon occurring in clathrate hydrates was examined through thermodynamic equilibrium studies and a ¹³C NMR spectroscopic analysis. The experimental results showed that approximately 67% of CH₄ was recoverable after replacement by CO₂. The corresponding chemical formula for the mixed clathrate hydrate after CO₂ replacement was 5.03CO₂ · 2.51CH₄ · 46H₂O. From an energy perspective, the activation energy for CO₂ hydrate formation (73.3 kJ mol^{−1}) was found to be much larger than that for CH₄ hydrate dissociation (14.5 kJ mol^{−1}), and the solid diffusion manifested a large activation energy. In fact, several experimental investigations showed that the activation energy for diffusion of the H₂O molecule in the bulk ice was in the range of 52–70 kJ mol^{−1} [154,155]. Wang et al. [156] measured the kinetics of the CH₄ hydrate formation from neutron diffraction and reported that the activation energy for the diffusion in hydrate phase was 61.5 kJ mol^{−1}.

With respect to the influencing factors on the conversion, it was found that the replacement rate and the mole fraction of CH₄ in gas phase increased with the increase of initial CO₂ mole fraction, the decrease of system pressure, and the increase of diffusion coefficient of CH₄ in hydrate [151]. Compared with injecting gaseous CO₂ method, liquid CO₂ injection was also benefit for the recovery of CH₄ from hydrate. The replacement percent of CH₄ hydrate decreased with the increase of hydrate saturation, but increased with the increase of water saturation [157].

5.4. Hydrate structure transformation

Guest gases in sII and sH hydrates are generally more stable than those in sI hydrates, which means a greater amount of energy is required to dissociate the hydrate structure, and hence more enthalpy of dissociation is produced. It was reported that sII hydrates commonly have a dissociation enthalpy approximately two times higher than that of sI hydrates [39]. Therefore, it is

promising to improve the hydrate characteristics by structure transformation from sI to sII or sH.

The existence of different sized cages in the sI and sII hydrates is involved in the structural transition between sI and sII, which is prompted by the compositional changes of guest mixtures. In an investigation of Fleyfel et al. [158], CO₂ was able to form sII. It was obtained that the sI hydrate was formed when with ethylene oxide, and CO₂ occupied both the small and the large cavities. When CO₂ hydrate was grown epitaxially to THF hydrate, sII was formed and CO₂ occupied the small cavities only [159]. In pure CH₄ hydrate, high-pressure studies revealed that upon compression, sI CH₄ hydrate transforms to sII at 100 MPa, and then to the sH at 600 MPa. Thus under increasing pressure, the clathrate found more efficient ways to pack its guest molecules into cages [160]. Clathrate hydrates formed from binary gas mixtures of CH₄ and other small lipophilic molecules changed from sI to sII and back depending on the concentration of CH₄ in the mixtures, although CH₄ and the other gases each formed the sI hydrates [161]. CH₄ and N₂ are found to be the main components in natural gas. Pure CH₄ and N₂ formed sI and sII hydrate, respectively, while the structure of the mixed clathrate hydrate was found to largely depend on their relative gas composition. Lee et al. [162] investigated phase and structural behavior according to the composition of CH₄+N₂ gas mixture. It was showed that the clathrate hydrate changed its structure from sI to sII between 25.24 and 28.51 mol% CH₄ concentration. In addition, natural gas mixtures may form sII hydrate if the gas content of C₃H₈ and C₄H₁₀ is sufficiently high. sII hydrate has a ratio of 2:1 of small to large cavities and will benefit from the extra stabilization of the larger cavities by hydrocarbons up to butanes, or other organic or inorganic molecules of similar size [150]. The kinetics of sII clathrate hydrates formed from pure C₃H₈ and a mixture of C₃H₈ and C₂H₆ were investigated in a semi-batch stirred tank reactor with pure C₃H₈. The intrinsic rate constant for C₃H₈ hydrate was between 0.42 and 0.52 mol m⁻² MPa⁻¹ s⁻¹. The intrinsic rate constant for C₂H₆ in sII was subsequently regressed on the formation of hydrates formed from an equimolar mixture of C₃H₈ and C₂H₆, and it was found to be 0.0137 mol m⁻² MPa⁻¹ s⁻¹ at 274 K/0.35 MPa, which was more than one order of magnitude smaller than that in sI hydrate [163].

6. Conclusions

Clathrate hydrates, if used as cold storage medium, have obvious advantages over water for the high cold storage density; over ice for the compatible phase change temperature; and over eutectic salts for the remarkable heat transfer properties and ageing resistance. For the purpose of evaluating and promoting the utilization of clathrate hydrates in cold storage air conditioning systems, a review of recent research progress concerning the characteristics of clathrate hydrates, optimization of clathrate hydrate properties, and clathrate hydrate based cold storage systems, is presented. Refrigerant clathrate hydrates, CO₂ clathrate hydrates, hydrocarbon clathrate hydrates and multi-component clathrate hydrates are introduced, and technologies to modify their phase change properties are discussed. Moreover, clathrate hydrates based cold storage air conditioning systems are evaluated, and the optimizing methods of the system performance are summarized. There still remain some topics to be investigated in future.

- (1) It was concluded by many academics that multi-component clathrate hydrates were more competitive alternatives as PCMs than single clathrate hydrates. Therefore, more investigations concerning the formation and dissociation conditions,

phase change behavior, and heat and mass transfer properties of multi-component clathrate hydrates are needed.

- (2) The area of clathrate hydrate phase equilibrium has reached a high level of maturity; however, data for hydrate formation and dissociation in the presence of substances that alter the phase diagram are needed for cold storage and other particular applications [159].
- (3) Additives are usually used to modify phase change properties of clathrate hydrates, such as to lower equilibrium pressure, to accelerate formation rate, and to increase phase change enthalpy. However, the effects of additives on the long-term use of clathrate hydrates as cold storage media are still unknown.
- (4) Nano-particles are recently widely used to enhance heat transfer performance of PCMs. However, unlike clathrate hydrates, most PCMs charge and discharge cooling energy via solid–liquid phase change and are not much related to the vapor phase. The addition of nano-particles in clathrate hydrates and its effect on the L_w–H–V phase equilibrium is also a topic to be studied.
- (5) Semi-clathrate hydrates that employ TBAB [164], TBAB [165,166], TBAC, TBPB, TBMAC [167], TBACI and TBANO₃ [92], are intensively proposed. It has been found that semi-clathrate structures are good for easier and faster formation of clathrate hydrate with larger phase change enthalpy, thus is worthy to be adopted to cooling applications.
- (6) Although attention has been paid to the performance of clathrate hydrate based cold storage systems, the investigation methods are still limited to lab-scaled experiments. It is suggested that large-scaled clathrate hydrate based systems could be built by simulation, to study how clathrate hydrates act for cooling supply to buildings, in order to provide predictions and estimations for actual cold storage cases.
- (7) Features of clathrate hydrates, namely the self-preservation effect, memory effect, gas conversion and hydrate structure transformation, are benefit for the utilization as cold storage media. Further study should be put onto the fundamental mechanisms of these features, as well as onto the ways to make use of these features in practical applications.

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